

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

No new matter has been added.

The Office Action mailed May 13, 2004, has been received and reviewed. Claims 1 through 23 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1 through 23 stand rejected. Applicant has amended claim 12 to add a comma after the claim number from which claim 12 depends, and respectfully requests reconsideration of the application as amended herein.

Information Disclosure Statement(s)

Applicant notes the filing of an Information Disclosure Statement herein on August 17, 2001 and notes that no copy of the PTO-1449 was returned with the outstanding Office Action, although the Office Action Summary (Form PTOL-326) indicated the same was attached. Applicant respectfully requests that the information cited on the PTO-1449 be made of record herein, and that a copy of the PTO-1449, as initialed by Examiner, be returned to Applicant's counsel.

Preliminary Amendment

Applicant's undersigned attorney notes the filing herein of a Preliminary Amendment on December 27, 2001, which filing was not acknowledged in the outstanding Office Action. Should the Preliminary Amendment have failed for some reason to have been entered in the Office file, Applicant's undersigned attorney will be happy to have a true copy thereof hand-delivered to the Examiner.

Double Patenting Rejection Based on U.S. Patent No. 6,199,177

Claims 1 through 23 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 through 26 of U.S. Patent No. 6,199,177. In order to avoid further expenses and time delay, Applicant elects to expedite the prosecution of the present application by filing a terminal disclaimer to obviate the double patenting rejections in compliance with 37 CFR §1.321 (b) and (c). Applicant's filing of the

terminal disclaimer should not be construed as acquiescence of the Examiner's double patenting or obviousness-type double patenting rejections. Attached is the terminal disclaimer and accompanying fee.

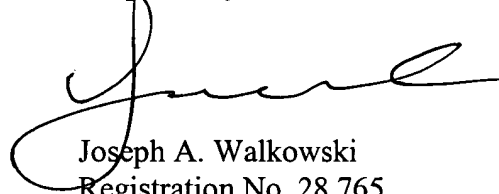
ENTRY OF AMENDMENTS

The amendments to claim 12 above should be entered by the Examiner because the amendments are supported by the as-filed specification and drawings and do not add any new matter to the application.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1-23 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early notice thereof is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner determine that additional issues remain which might be resolved by a telephone conference, he is respectfully invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Walkowski', with a large, stylized loop at the beginning.

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